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TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA IMMEDIATE 1676

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SUBJECT: SECRETARY CLINTON LETTER TO PRESIDENT GUL ON  
TURKISH SPACE REQUEST (S/ES: 201000523)

¶1. Please deliver the following message from Secretary Clinton to President Gul. There will be no signed original.

¶2. Begin Text:

Dear Mr. President:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the interest of the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish Air Force in human spaceflight. I congratulate Turkey on the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Turkish Air Force. The United States greatly values the strong cooperation between our countries' air forces, as well as the work we have done together in the areas of science and technology. We look forward to continuing our strong partnership.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is retiring the Space Shuttle in 2010 or shortly thereafter. All of the crew assignments for the five remaining flights have been filled for some time given the advance planning and training required for each flight. As a result, it will not be possible to schedule a Turkish pilot to fly on the Space Shuttle to the Space Station in 2011.

Nonetheless, the United States is continuing plans for future human space flight missions on vehicles being developed to replace the Space Shuttle. We anticipate significant international participation in that effort. In the interim, there are also opportunities for cooperation on research on the Space Station on a bilateral basis. NASA will engage the appropriate authorities in Turkey to explore possibilities for future cooperation.

Sincerely yours,  
Hillary Rodham Clinton

End Text.  
CLINTON